

# **“POST-9/11 VETERANS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2007”**



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## H.R. 2702

# The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007

Not since the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 has a single event given a generation a call to arms to defend this nation until the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Since World War II, our government has offered educational assistance to our veterans when they returned home. The first G.I. bill in 1944 helped veterans readjust to civilian life and afforded them the opportunity to do something that many had missed out on – getting a college education. The post-World War II G.I. bill paid for veterans' tuition, books, fees and other training costs, and provided them a monthly stipend. Out of the 15 million veterans who returned home from World War II, more than half used the G.I. bill's benefits to better themselves through education.

Since then, Congress passed several other G.I. bills to grant educational benefits to veterans returning from the Korean War and the Vietnam War. After the Vietnam War, Congress passed two G.I. bills that established peacetime educational benefits for members of the Armed Services – most recently the Montgomery G.I. Bill of 1985. Although the Montgomery G.I. Bill provides educational benefits, it was not designed to meet the needs of our current situation in which several hundred thousand men and women in uniform are fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have strained our entire all-volunteer military, forcing many of our Reservist and National Guard units into extended tours of duty. Many of our men and women in the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps have served more than one tour of duty in Iraq.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 is a bill designed to expand the educational benefits that our nation offers to our brave men and women who have served us so honorably since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. This bill is designed to give this generation, who took it upon themselves to enlist after 9/11, benefits very similar to those provided to the veterans of World War II.

### Major Provisions of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007

- This bill will increase educational benefits to members of the military who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. To qualify, veterans must have served at least two years of active duty, with at least some period of active duty time served beginning on or after September 11, 2001. This includes members of the Reserve and National Guard who have served an aggregate of two years of active duty service on or after September 11, 2001.
- Like previous G.I. Bills, veterans will receive educational assistance for up to a total of 36 months, which equals four academic years.
- The bill will provide veterans pursuing an approved program of education with benefits to cover their tuition, books, fees, room and board, and a monthly stipend of \$1,000. The bill will also allow payments for tutorial assistance as well as licensure and certification tests.
- The House version of the bill will limit benefit payments to the cost of in-State tuition at the most expensive public institution in the State in which the veteran is enrolled. If the veteran were to decide to attend a private institution, the veteran would have to pay the difference between the cost of the private institution and the in-State tuition of the most expensive public institution of the State in which the veteran is enrolled.
- Veterans will have up to fifteen years to exercise their educational assistance benefits. Veterans will also be barred from receiving concurrent assistance from this program and another similar program such as the current Montgomery G.I. bill program.

**\*\*\*ORIGINAL COSPONSORS\*\*\***

Reps. CARNEY (D-PA), MORAN (D-VA), BOUCHER (D-VA), and SALAZAR (D-CO)

Distributed by Robert. C "Bobby" Scott, M.C.



# **“Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007” (S.22)**

## **Background**

Our country has a tradition – since World War II – of offering educational assistance to returning veterans. In the 1940s, the first “G.I. bill” helped transform notions of equality in American society. The post-World War II G.I. bill paid for veterans’ tuition, books, fees, and other training costs, and also paid them a monthly stipend. Approximately 7.8 million veterans used the benefits given under the original G.I. bill in some form, out of a wartime veteran population of 15 million.

Over the last several decades, Congress subsequently passed several other G.I. bills, which also gave educational benefits to veterans. However, benefits awarded under those subsequent bills have not been as generous as our nation’s original G.I. bill. Currently, veterans’ educational benefits are administered under the Montgomery G.I. Bill. This program periodically adjusts veterans’ educational benefits, but the program is designed primarily for peacetime – not wartime – service.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 is a bill designed to expand the educational benefits that our nation offers to the brave men and women who have served us so honorably since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It is a bill designed to give our returning troops educational benefits very similar to the benefits provided to veterans after World War II.

## **Major Provisions of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007**

- Increased educational benefits will be available to those members of the military who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. In general, to qualify, veterans must have served at least two years of active duty, with at least some period of active duty time served beginning on or after September 11, 2001.
- The bill provides for educational benefits to be paid for a duration of time that is linked to time served in the military. Generally, veterans will not receive assistance for more than a total of 36 months, which equals four academic years.
- Benefits provided under the bill would allow veterans pursuing an approved program of education to receive payments covering the established charges of their program, books, and a monthly stipend of \$1,000. Moreover, the bill would allow additional payments for tutorial assistance, as well as licensure and certification tests. Under a revised version of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007, benefit payments would be limited to the costs of the most expensive public institution in the state in which the veteran is enrolled.
- Veterans would have up to fifteen years to use their educational assistance entitlement. But veterans would be barred from receiving concurrent assistance from this program and another similar program, such as the Montgomery G.I. bill program.

## **Cosponsors**

Senators Baucus, Bingaman, Boxer, Brown, Casey, Clinton, Durbin, Harkin, Kerry, Landrieu, Lautenberg, McCaskill, Mikulski, Sanders, Stabenow, Tester, Wyden and Representatives Boucher (D-PA), Carney (D-PA), Moran (D-VA), Salazar (D-CO), and Scott (D-VA) are co-sponsors of the legislation.

## **Veterans’ Organization Endorsements**

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 has been endorsed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), the Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA), the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), and the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).



**“Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007”**  
**Introduced by Sen. James Webb on January 4, 2007**  
**Section-by-Section Summary**

Section 1: Short title – “Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007.”

Section 2: **Educational Assistance for Members of the Armed Forces Who Serve After September 11, 2001.** This section adds a new Chapter 33 (entitled “Post 9/11 Educational Assistance”) to Title 38 of the U.S. Code, with the following new sections:

Section 3301: **Definitions.** This section provides definitions of key terms.

Section 3311: **Educational assistance for service in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001 – entitlement.** This section prescribes multiple categories of veterans entitled to educational benefits under this Act. In general, to qualify, veterans must have served at least two years of active duty, with at least some period of active duty time served beginning on or after September 11, 2001.

Section 3312: **Educational assistance – duration.** Veterans are entitled to receive educational assistance for a period of time that is linked to their entitlement, as measured by Section 3311 above. In general, veterans may not receive assistance for more than a total of 36 months, which equals 4 academic years.

Section 3313: **Educational assistance – payment and amount.** In general, veterans may receive monetary assistance to pursue an approved program of education as follows: (i) payments covering the established charges of the program, (ii) room and board, and (iii) a monthly stipend of \$1,000. [Note that these are basically the same benefits paid to World War II veterans.] This Section prescribes the timing of such payments and revised payment guidelines related to less-than-half-time education, apprenticeships, on-the-job-training, correspondence school, and flight training.

Section 3314: **Tutorial assistance.** Veterans may receive additional payment for tutorial assistance, not to exceed \$100/month, for a maximum of 12 months, or until a maximum of \$1,200 is used.

Section 3315: **Licensure and certification tests.** Veterans may receive payment for one licensing or certification test, not to exceed the lesser of \$2,000 or the test fee.

Section 3321: **Time limitation for use of and eligibility for entitlement.** Veterans have 15 years (as measured under the provisions of this Section) to use their educational entitlement.

Section 3322: **Bar to duplication of educational assistance benefits.** Veterans who receive educational benefits under this Act may not receive concurrent assistance under another similar program; instead, veterans must elect one program over another.

Section 3323: Administration. This Section: (i) gives guidance on interpreting operative terms, and (ii) instructs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide information to veterans regarding this Act's educational benefits, and to prescribe regulations to carry out this Act.

Section 3324: Allocation of administration and costs. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall administer this program, and payments shall be made from funds made available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the payment of readjustment benefits. This Section also prescribes ways for veterans to choose to elect into this Act's program from the existing Montgomery G.I. Bill program.

**FLOOR STATEMENT  
SENATOR JAMES WEBB  
JANUARY 4, 2007**

**Introduction of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 (S.22)**

Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of a bill that I am introducing, entitled the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007. This bill is designed to expand the educational benefits that our nation offers to the brave men and women who have served us so honorably since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

As a veteran who hails from a family with a long history of military service, I am proud to offer this bill as my first piece of legislation in the United States Senate.

Most of us know that our country has a tradition – since World War II – of offering educational assistance to returning veterans. In the 1940s, the first “G.I. bill” helped transform notions of equality in American society. The G.I. bill program was designed to help veterans readjust to civilian life, avoid high levels of unemployment, and give veterans the opportunity to receive the education and training that they missed while bravely serving in the military.

To achieve these goals, the post-World War II G.I. bill paid for veterans’ tuition, books, fees, and other training costs, and also gave a monthly stipend. After World War II, 7.8 million veterans used the benefits given under the original G.I. bill in some form, out of a wartime veteran population of 15 million.

Over the last several decades, Congress subsequently passed several other G.I. bills, which also gave educational benefits to veterans. However, benefits awarded under those subsequent bills have not been as generous as our nation’s original G.I. bill.

Currently, veterans’ educational benefits are administered under the Montgomery G.I. bill. This program periodically adjusts veterans’ educational benefits, but the program is designed primarily for peacetime – not wartime – service.

Yet now our nation is fighting a worldwide war against terrorism. Since 9/11, we have witnessed a sharp increase in the demands placed upon our military. Many of our military members are serving two or three tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. In light of these immense hardships, it is now time to implement a more robust educational assistance program for our heroic veterans who have sacrificed so much for our great nation.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 does just that. This bill is designed to give our returning troops educational benefits identical to the benefits provided to veterans after World War II.



The new benefits package under the bill I am introducing today will include the costs of tuition, room and board, and a monthly stipend of \$1,000. By contrast, existing law under the Montgomery G.I. bill provides educational support of up to \$1,000 per month for four years, totaling \$9,000 for each academic year. This benefit simply is insufficient after 9/11.

For example, costs of tuition, room, and board for an in-state student at George Mason University (located in Fairfax, Virginia) add up to approximately \$14,000 per year. In addition, existing law requires participating service members to pay \$1,200 during their first year of service in order to even qualify for the benefit.

Let me briefly summarize some of the reforms that are contained in the bill I am introducing today.

First, these increased educational benefits will be available to those members of the military who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. In general, to qualify, veterans must have served at least two years of active duty, with at least some period of active duty time served beginning on or after September 11, 2001.

Next, the bill provides for educational benefits to be paid for a duration of time that is linked to time served in the military. Generally, veterans will not receive assistance for more than a total of 36 months, which equals four academic years.

Third, as I mentioned a moment ago, my bill would allow veterans pursuing an approved program of education to receive payments covering the established charges of their program, room and board, and a monthly stipend of \$1,000. Moreover, the bill would allow additional payments for tutorial assistance, as well as licensure and certification tests.

Fourth, veterans would have up to fifteen years to use their educational assistance entitlement. But veterans would be barred from receiving concurrent assistance from this program and another similar program, such as the Montgomery G.I. bill program.

Finally, under this bill, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs would administer the program, promulgate rules to carry out the new law, and pay for the program from funds made available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the payment of readjustment benefits.

Again, I note that the benefits I have outlined today essentially mirror the benefits allowed under the G.I. bill enacted after World War II. That bill helped spark economic growth and expansion for a whole generation of Americans. The bill I introduce today likely will have similar beneficial effects. As the post-World War II experience so clearly indicated, better educated veterans have higher income levels, which in the long run will increase tax revenues.

Moreover, a strong G.I. bill will have a positive effect on military recruitment, broadening the socio-economic makeup of the military and reducing the direct costs of recruitment.

Perhaps more importantly, better-educated veterans have a more positive readjustment experience. This experience lowers the costs of treating post-traumatic stress disorder and other readjustment-related difficulties.

The United States has never erred when it has made sustained new investments in higher education and job training. Enacting the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 is not only the right thing to do for our men and women in uniform, but it also is a strong tonic for an economy plagued by growing disparities in wealth, stagnant wages, and the outsourcing of American jobs.

Mr. President and my esteemed colleagues, I am a proud veteran who is honored to serve this great nation. As long as I represent Virginians in the United States Senate, I will make it a priority to help protect our brave men and women in uniform.

I am honored that the Senate Majority Leader has agreed to join with me to be a defender and advocate of our veterans. The Majority Leader has included the concepts of the bill I introduce today in his leadership bill designed to rebuild the United States military. Additionally, I plan to work closely with Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Akaka – and all of my Senate colleagues – to statutorily update G.I. benefits.

Together we can provide the deserving veterans of the 9/11 era with the same program of benefits that our fathers and grandfathers received after World War II.

Mr. President, I ask that the bill I introduce today – the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 – be printed in the Record along with this statement.



# The Virginian-Pilot

THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2007 • 142ND YEAR • NO. 171 • 50 CENTS

MILITARY | GI BILL OVERHAUL

## FIGHTING FOR AN EDUCATION

The GI Bill once put veterans through college. Now, it serves as more of a down payment. Sen. Jim Webb aims to close that gap.

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

WASHINGTON — Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., carried through on a campaign promise Wednesday, lobbying a Senate committee to pay college tuition and a monthly stipend to veterans who have served on active duty since the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Webb, a former Marine and a Navy secretary, argued that pro-

viding today's veterans with a GI Bill similar to what World War II-era veterans received would boost recruiting, ease the transition of soldiers returning from war and raise the quality of life for those who have risked their lives.

Webb proposes paying tuition, room and board and a \$1,000 monthly stipend to veterans who have served on active duty for at

least two years.

"I hope that in good spirit, the administration will look at this in terms of how we really should be rewarding the people who step forward," he told the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. "It's a very small percentage of the country that's done this, and they

Please see GI Bill, Page A10

### WHAT VETERANS GET

**\$38,700**

That's the maximum a veteran, currently enrolled and who served on active duty, can qualify for during a college career.

### WHAT COLLEGE COSTS

**\$51,184**

That's the cost of a four-year degree based on the current one-year average for tuition, room and board at a four-year public institution.

In Virginia, the cost is slightly higher at \$52,788.

At private schools, the cost tops \$120,000.

### HOW MANY ARE HELPED

Veterans Affairs distributed \$2.76 billion in education aid to 498,123 people last year.

### SEN. WEBB'S PROPOSAL

It would guarantee tuition, room and board plus a \$1,000 monthly stipend to veterans who have served on active duty for at least two years since Sept. 11, 2001.

Next The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs is expected to take up the bill next month.



GENEVIÈVE BOSS/THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT FILE PHOTO

# GI Bill: Benefits have eroded over time

Continued from Page A1

deserve the right to have as big a future as they can go out and get."

Kimberly Hunter, a spokeswoman for Webb, said there is no estimate yet of how much the expanded benefit would cost. The proposal is backed by several veterans' groups, including The American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

The committee is expected to take up the bill next month.

Congress has boosted the GI benefit several times since its inception — the last a \$9 billion, 10-year increase passed in 2001 that even then was criticized as too small to keep up with soaring costs.

The Department of Veterans Affairs, which administers the program, distributed \$2.76 billion in education aid to 498,123 people last year.

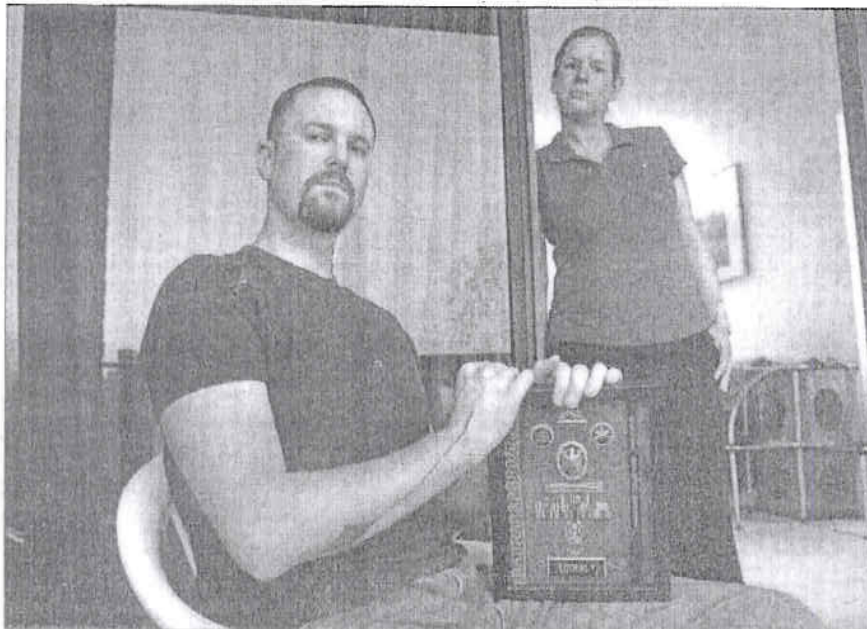
While that amount is substantial, it falls short of the original program's scope.

The maximum GI Bill amount a currently enrolled veteran who served on active duty can qualify for during a college career is roughly \$38,700. But for many students, that is not nearly enough to pay for tuition, room, board and books. Plus, the GI Bill covers only four years of school, leaving veterans on their own if they take longer to graduate.

The average cost of one year's tuition, room and board at four-year public institutions in 2006-07 was \$12,796, according to the College Board. For private schools, the one-year cost was \$30,367. Tuition and fees at all schools have risen an average of 35 percent in the past five years, while the highest GI Bill monthly payout has increased only 20 percent.

In Virginia this year, the average tuition at four-year public institutions, including room and board, was \$13,197, according to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. It is a 7.7 percent increase over last year. The tuition at public two-year colleges also has climbed, up 6.3 percent over last year. The average tuition at the state's community colleges is \$2,269.

Virginia Gov. Timothy M. Kaine in March signed into law a bill that reduces college tuition for the state's active-



JACQUELYN MARTIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Marc Edgerly, above with his fiancée Jen Freeman, is enrolled in the GI Bill program while attending George Mason University. He says he will be left with about \$50,000 in student loans when he graduates.

## ITS ORIGIN

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the GI Bill, officially called the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, in 1944, largely to keep millions of demobilized World War II soldiers from flooding the job market. By 1956, 7.8 million servicemen had used the benefit for college or vocational training.

duty members, activated National Guard or reservist members, or those mobilized or on temporary active duty for six months or more.

The change, which takes effect July 1, ensures that tuition costs for those service members attending a public college in Virginia won't rise higher than the amount covered by their military services Tuition Assistance program or the school's in-state tuition rate, whichever is greater.

Big student loans are not uncommon among college students in general; the average graduate now leaves school with \$19,000 in loans.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the GI Bill, officially called the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, in 1944, largely to keep millions of demobilized World War II soldiers from flooding the job market.

By 1956, 7.8 million servicemen had used the benefit for college or vocational training.

Veterans initially received about \$500 per year, enough to pay for tuition, room and books at most colleges, according to Keith Olson, a University of Maryland professor who wrote a book on the GI Bill. But the purchasing power of the GI Bill benefits has eroded over the years.

To enroll, troops must buy in to the program. Their pay is reduced by \$1,200 during the first year of service, and then they must serve their full enlistment period. Those who serve three years or more are eligible for the full benefit of \$1,075 per month. Some may qualify for additional money provided by their military branch, known as a GI Bill "kicker."

Despite its original largesse, some veterans aren't sure the GI Bill should pay for the entire cost of their education.

Carl Edgerly, 55, served for three years in the Army, including a year in Vietnam. Now an accountant for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, he is also a lieutenant colonel in the National Guard scheduled for a tour in Iraq.

Edgerly worked full time while he was on the GI Bill, and

received \$374 per month in GI Bill benefits. He attended Bismarck Junior College and then University of Mary College, both in Bismarck, N.D.

Despite the costs his son faces, Edgerly said he believes the program is meant to give a soldier a "head start" rather than a free ride in college.

His son agrees — somewhat. Marc Edgerly enlisted in a burst of patriotism following Sept. 11, 2001, and spent four years in the Army's Old Guard, serving on honor guards at Arlington National Cemetery.

Now at George Mason University, Edgerly also works part time as a security guard at \$12.50 per hour. His yearly tuition bill is about \$7,000. He and his fiancée pay around \$1,200 monthly for a small apartment near campus in the high-rent Washington suburb.

He expects to find a well-paying job as an engineer after he graduates, which should help to repay his loans. And he has a big incentive to stay in school.

"My fiancée says she won't marry me if I don't get a college degree," he said.

This story was compiled from reports by staff writer Amy Couteé and The Associated Press.



## THE ROANOKE TIMES

### Update the GI Bill

*The nation needs better education benefits for those who enlist in the war on terror.*

May 13, 2006

U.S. Sen. James Webb wants better education benefits for military veterans who have seen active duty in the post-9/11 global war on terror.

He is right. A grateful nation should do more -- but not as much more as Virginia's junior senator envisions.

Webb has introduced a bill in Congress that would provide college tuition, room and board plus a \$1,000 monthly stipend to veterans who have served at least two years' active duty since the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States.

Clearly, an increase in the GI benefit is warranted. A currently enrolled veteran eligible under the GI Bill can receive a maximum of only about \$38,700 during his or her entire college career, which can extend over only four years.

These limits don't square with today's realities: Nationwide, the average annual cost of tuition, room and board at four-year public colleges in the 2006-07 school year was \$12,796, the College Board reports. The State Council of Higher Education figures that it was \$13,197 in Virginia.

Even the lower amount leaves almost a \$12,500 gap over four years that veterans will have to fill. And if they cannot complete their undergraduate courses in that time frame, they're on their own -- though many college students these days are not able to finish in four years.

They're not all goofing off or wasting time. Sometimes students get blocked out of required courses and need more time to finish. Others can't take full loads because they're working to support themselves or their families.

People willing to enlist, especially during this time of war, should have a benefit that actually covers their college tuition, room and board at a public institution.

Beyond the simple decency of helping people who might have sacrificed a lot in defense of the nation, there is a compelling, practical reason to do more: to boost recruitment.

With wars in Iraq and Afghanistan going poorly and regular, reserve and National Guard troops stretched to the max, free market principles demand a higher incentive. Webb is right to fight for them.

## THE MILITARY TIMES

### **VFW rallies for better GI Bill benefits**

By Rick Maze

June 13, 2007

The head of a major veterans' group is trying to rally his membership to get Congress to pass a promised overhaul of GI Bill education benefits.

Gary Kurpius, commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars, the nation's largest organization for combat veterans, is pushing for Congress to pass S 22, a bill introduced in January by Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., that would pay full tuition plus a monthly stipend for veterans attending college full time.

Kurpius has asked VFW members to contact their members of Congress to urge their support for the bill.

Additionally, Webb's bill — the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 — would eliminate the \$1,200 fee charged for enrolling in the GI Bill and would give veterans up to 15 years after they leave the service to use their benefits, five more than currently allowed.

The bill is pending before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, which could take up the measure as early as June 27. A partisan fight over the measure is possible — Democrats have rallied around Webb's bill, while Republicans have expressed doubts because no money has been set aside for the added benefits in the Democrat-passed budget plan for 2008.

"The Montgomery G.I. Bill was enacted two decades ago, but now we're involved in the longest combat operation with an all-volunteer force in our nation's history," Kurpius said. "Our troops have earned a new G.I. Bill that is based on 21st-century realities."



For Immediate Release  
May 9, 2007

Contact: Kimberly Hunter – 202-228-5258

## **Senator Webb Pushes G.I. Education Bill In Veterans' Affairs Committee Hearing**

### ***Veterans' Service Organizations Call for Increased Support for Returning Service Members***

**Washington, DC** – Senator Jim Webb argued strongly for passage of his proposed G.I. Bill for post-9/11 veterans in the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearing today. Introduced on his first day in office, the legislation seeks to provide veterans of the 9/11 era with educational benefits similar to those provided to service members at the end of World War II.

Under the legislation, returning service members could earn up to 36 months of benefits which would include payment of tuition, room and board, fees and educational costs plus a \$1,000 a month stipend while enrolled in full-time training. The Committee is considering a revised version of S.22, which adds a key provision capping tuition benefits at the highest in-state public university that should significantly lower the cost of the bill.

"The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 is designed to expand the educational benefits that our nation offers to the men and women who have served us so honorably since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001," said Senator Webb in his opening remarks to the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee."

"The United States has never erred when it has made sustained new investments in higher education and job training" continued Webb. "Enacting the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007 is not only the right thing to do for our men and women in uniform, but it also is a strong tonic for an economy plagued by growing disparities in wealth, stagnant wages, and the outsourcing of American jobs,"

To read the full text of Senator Webb's remarks submitted in the Congressional record, please go to: <http://webb.senate.gov/newsroom/record.cfm?id=273786&>

For audio of the Senator's remarks from the hearing, please go to:  
<http://demradio.senate.gov/actualities/webb/webb070509.mp3>

The legislation is expected for a mark-up within the next month. Senators Bingaman, Boxer, Brown, Durbin, Kerry, McCaskill, Mikulski, Sanders, Stabenow, Tester, and Wyden are co-sponsors of the legislation.

In written testimony to the Veterans' Affairs Committee on May 9, 2007:

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States said, "This legislation enhances military strength while providing a service member's education benefit to aid in transition assistance and equips a generation of veterans to face the challenges of tomorrow. We have long advocated a GI Bill in the spirit of the original WW II bill, which would cover tuition, housing, fees, books, and provide a cost-of-living stipend. This legislation accomplishes these goals and more...The VFW enthusiastically supports this bill."

The Paralyzed Veterans of America said, "PVA supports this bill that would enhance the current educational benefits for the men and women who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001...The bill allows the veteran up to 15 years to take advantage of these benefits. This is an important addition since many returning veterans may not be emotionally ready right away to start school. This educational package offers the veteran many incentives to encourage them to enroll in school or continue with their educational program."

The American Legion said, "The American Legion applauds S. 22 in that it allows for members of the armed services to receive enhanced educational benefits more in line with today's needs. Enactment of this law will greatly increase the recruitment and retention ability of the branches of the armed services."

**NOTE:** Senator Webb's bill has been officially endorsed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Air Force Sergeants Association, and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States.



**Jim Webb**  
U.S. Senator for Virginia

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**For Immediate Release  
June 1, 2007**

**Contact: Jessica Smith – 202-228-5185**

**Senator Webb's GI Bill Wins Endorsement of  
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of Americans (IAVA)**

***Group Calls Educational Bill an Important Readiness Tool***

Washington, DC—The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the nation's first and largest group dedicated to the troops and veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, today endorsed Senator Jim Webb's GI Bill, which seeks to provide veterans of the 9/11 era with educational benefits similar to those provided to service members at the end of World War II.

"Today we have the opportunity to renew our social contract with our servicemen and women. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) supports reinstating a World War II style GI Bill and therefore strongly endorses S.22, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007," writes IAVA Legislative Director Patrick Campbell in the organization's endorsement letter.

"IAVA believes that S.22 is more than just a social investment; it's an important readiness tool. The military needs to recruit an additional 70,000 active duty servicemembers over the next two years. Improving educational benefits for veterans is an important strategy for accomplishing this goal," writes Campbell.

Under Senator Webb's legislation, the "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007," returning service members could earn up to 36 months of benefits that would include payment of tuition, room and board, fees and educational costs plus a \$1,000 a month stipend while enrolled in full-time training.

The Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs is considering a revised version of S.22, which adds a key provision capping tuition benefits at the highest in-state public university that should significantly lower the cost of the bill.

"It is an honor to receive support for my G.I. bill from the IAVA. The men and women who have served us honorably in Iraq and Afghanistan deserve the same benefits, and the same long-term opportunities, that were provided to the WWII generation," said Webb. "Better-educated veterans who know that their service is valued at the highest levels of government will have a more positive readjustment experience, and will become more successful, productive citizens."

Webb's bill has also been endorsed by the **Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)**, **Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)**, the **Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)** and the **Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS)**. Senators Bingaman, Boxer, Brown, Casey, Clinton, Durbin, Kerry, Landrieu, McCaskill, Mikulski, Sanders, Stabenow, Tester, and Wyden are co-sponsors of the legislation.

**The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)**, **American Legion** and **Paralyzed Veterans of America** also offered support for the legislation in testimony before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on May 9, 2007.

"MOAA supports S. 22 because it represents a vision, perhaps even a GI Bill 'holy grail,' that our nation's warriors surely have earned in service to the nation," said Robert Norton, Deputy Director of Government Relations for the Military Officers Association of America.

Webb serves on the Committee on Foreign Relations, Committee on Armed Services, Committee on Veterans Affairs, and the Joint Economic Committee.

To read the text of Senator Webb's remarks on S.22 submitted in the Congressional record, please go to: <http://webb.senate.gov/newsroom/record.cfm?id=273786&>

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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
FOUNDED 1899



GARY KURPIUS  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

VFW MEMORIAL BUILDING  
200 MARYLAND AVENUE, NE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002-5799

January 25, 2007

The Honorable Jim Webb  
US Senate  
C1 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Webb:

On behalf of the 2.4 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and our Auxiliaries, I would like to offer our support for S. 22, the *Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007*. This vital legislation enhances military strength while providing a service members' education benefit to aid in transition assistance, and equips a generation of veterans to face the challenges of tomorrow.

The VFW applauds your leadership for introducing S. 22. We have long advocated for the repeal of the \$1200 buy-in fee and a GI Bill in the spirit of the original; covering tuition, housing, fees, books, and providing a cost-of-living stipend. Your legislation accomplishes these goals and more. It recognizes the tens of thousands of guard and reserve members who have actively served an aggregate of 24 months defending our nation. It lengthens the post-service usage period from 10 to 15 years from date of discharge and establishes a post-service benefit for the guard and reserve.

The original GI Bill helped to create the middle class through improving access to education and creating an unprecedented number of opportunities for millions of Americans. It has eased the transition from active duty into civilian life for millions of veterans, while equipping its recipients with the tools to adapt in the ever-changing marketplace. The Department of Defense has long used the GI Bill to recruit and retain ambitious young people dedicated to public service. The GI Bill has profoundly improved our national standard of education, our military's strength, and the quality of life for all of its recipients.

We look forward to working with you and your staff on this important legislation. Thank you for your stalwart support for America's veterans and all who stand in defense of our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gary Kurpius".  
Gary Kurpius  
Commander-in-Chief



## Vietnam Veterans of America

8605 Cameron Street, Suite 400 • Silver Spring, MD 20910 • Telephone (301) 585-4000  
Main Fax (301) 585-0519 • Advocacy (301) 585-3180 • Communications (301) 585-5145 • Finance (301) 585-5542  
World Wide Web: <http://www.vva.org>

A Not-For-Profit Veterans Service Organization Chartered by the United States Congress

### FAX LETTER

January 24, 2007

The Honorable Jim Webb  
United States Senate  
C1 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Webb,

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) commends you for commencing your tour of duty in the Senate by introducing S. 22, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007. We fully support your effort to do for our newest veterans what our nation did for our oldest veterans sixty years ago.

Your ambitious piece of legislation warrants the backing of all Americans who care about the men and women who don the uniform. As you pointed out in your floor statement, the post-World War II G.I. Bill paid for veterans' tuition, books, fees, and other training costs as well as a monthly living stipend. This landmark law made the difference in the lives of millions of veterans, rewarding them for their service and sacrifices and enabling them to enter the expanding ranks of the middle class.

Subsequent bills on educational benefits for veterans were far less generous. S. 22 would do the right thing for veterans of the global war on terror. It will also, we believe, serve as an incentive to military recruiting, which has taken a hit with the losses and frustration of our venture in Iraq.

VVA would be pleased to work with you to pass this well-conceived and important legislative initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Rowan".

John Rowan  
National President





**EANGUS**

3133 MT. VERNON AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305

[www.eangus.org](http://www.eangus.org)

(703) 519-3846  
FAX (703) 519-3849

March 13, 2007

The Honorable Jim Webb  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) is the only military service association that represents the interests of every enlisted soldier and airmen in the Army and Air National Guard. With a constituency base of over 414,000 soldiers and airmen, their families, and a large retiree membership, EANGUS engages Capitol Hill on behalf of courageous Guard persons across this nation.

On behalf of EANGUS, and the soldiers and airmen it represents, I'd like to communicate our support for legislation to establish a program of educational assistance for members of the Armed Forces who have served since September 11, 2001. The "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007" (S. 22) will make great strides in helping our National Guard men and women obtain their post-secondary education goals.

We applaud you for taking legislative steps to put in place vital ways for members of our military to pursue their college or vocational education. Although there is a two year active duty requirement in the legislation, presumably most in the Selected Reserve will achieve that threshold while serving in the Global War on Terror. We look forward to working with your staff as this legislation works its way into law.

Working for America's Best!

MSG Michael P. Cline, USA (Ret)  
Executive Director



## **AIR FORCE SERGEANTS ASSOCIATION**

**P.O. Box 50 Temple Hills, Maryland 20757-0050**

**Phone: 301-899-3500 E-Mail: [staff@afsahq.org](mailto:staff@afsahq.org)**

March 29, 2007

The Honorable Jim Webb  
United States Senate  
140 Senate Russell Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Webb,

On behalf of the 130,000 AFSA members, I want to express our support of your bill, S.22. Your proposal will expand the Montgomery GI Bill to include a myriad of benefits for our entire military community.

If approved, this bill offers full coverage of tuition, room and board; and a monthly stipend of \$1,000. It proposes to extend the benefit "loss clock" from 10 to 15 years and eliminate the \$1,200 active-duty enrollment fee. There are also provisions in this bill to fund up to \$2,000 for one licensing or certification test and, if needed, up to \$1200 for tutorial assistance. These focused funding efforts not only will enhance the Montgomery GI Bill...they could also encourage military members to take advantage of a broader scope of educational opportunities.

Senator Webb, the Air Force Sergeant's Association commends your leadership in attempting to align legislative initiatives with the educational goals of our military members. We stand ready to support your bill, S.22 and any other issues of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard M. Dean', is written over a horizontal line.

RICHARD M. DEAN  
Chief Executive Officer

**Serving the Total Air Force Enlisted Corps**  
**— All Ranks —**

04/06/2007 10:01AM





## IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS OF AMERICA

May 29, 2007

Honorable Jim Webb  
144 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Jim Webb:

After World War II, nearly eight million servicemembers (more than half of the entire American fighting force) took advantage of the education benefits afforded them by the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944. A veteran of WWII was entitled to free tuition, books and a living stipend that completely covered the cost of education. Sixty years later we are still reaping the benefits of one of the greatest social investment programs ever implemented.

Today we have the opportunity to renew our social contract with our servicemen and women. *Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America* (IAVA) supports reinstating a World War II style GI Bill and therefore strongly endorses S.22 the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007. S.22 reinstitutes WWII style educational benefits that would fully cover the cost of education (tuition, room & board and a monthly stipend) regardless of which school the servicemember attends.

The current Montgomery GI Bill, as created in 1984, was conceived in peace-time and contains several obstacles to a veteran trying to use well-earned benefits. First, active duty educational benefits require a hefty \$1,200 initial buy-in. Second, servicemembers are required to pay tuition, room & board and textbook costs up-front and are then reimbursed over the course of the semester. Lastly, the benefits only cover 75% of the cost of a public school education and 32% of a private school education.

Sadly, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education, only 8% of servicemembers use all of their educational benefits and more the 30% never touch their GI benefits (returning over \$230 million to the US Treasury). S.22 will relieve the returning veteran of the need to work a second job, live on Mama's couch, attend a lower rated university and/or take out student loans in order pay for his or her education.

IAVA believes that S.22 is more than just a social investment; it's an important readiness tool. The military needs to recruit an additional 70,000 active duty servicemembers over the next two years. Improving educational benefits for veterans is an important strategy for accomplishing this goal. The alternative is to lower recruitment standards and

continue to increase enlistment and retention bonuses. We have already seen the military double the number of GED waivers and increase the number felonies allowable by a new recruit. Enlistment and retention bonuses have already climbed to \$20,000 and could grow even higher. Improving the GI Bill program benefits veterans and the rest of the country.

We can continue to scrape the bottom of the barrel for new recruits, or we can pass S.22. Potential enlistees and their parents would know that military service would allow them to take advantage of the best educational opportunities available. This would drastically raise the quality of the recruits we could enlist. We would replace recruiting posters promising "\$70,000 for Education" (that 92% of the military will never see) with something akin to "Serve Your Country, Get Accepted to College, and We Will Take Care of the Rest."

Sincerely,

Patrick Campbell  
Legislative Director